
Mr. COOKE's
S E R M O N

Preach'd Dec. 12th, 1704.

Before the Gentlemen Educated at
Merchant-Taylors-School.

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SEER MON
Mr. COOKES



Preach'd Dec. 1704.

Before the Gentlemen Educated at
Merchant-Taylor-School.

The Christian Sacrifices recommended: N^o 2

I N A
S E R M O N

P R E A C H E D

In the Parish-Church of
St. Mary Le-Bow,

December 12th, 1704.

B E F O R E

The Gentlemen Educated at
Merchant-Taylor's-School.

Publish'd at the Request of the Stewards.

By *T H O. C O O K E, A. M.* *K*
Chaplain to his Grace *James Duke of Ormond.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for S A M. S M I T H and B E N J. W A L F O R D, at
the *Prince's Arms* in St. Paul's Church-yard, 1704.

The Christian's duties recommended:

IN A
SERMON

PREACHED
In the Parish-Church of



St. Martin's
December 1704

The Gentlemen Educated at
Merchant-Tyler-School.

Published at the Request of the Students.

By THO. COOKE, A. M.

Chaplain to his Grace James Duke of Ormonde.

LONDON:

Printed for S. M. Smith and B. W. Wilson, at
the Theatre, near in St. Martin's Church-yard, 1704.

T O

Thomas Hoy, *Reg. Prof. Med. Oxon.*

Edward Forbes, *Esq;*

Mr. Allen Bancks.

William Mowbray, *Gent.*

Mr. Joseph Sowthen.

Mr. Edmund Pickering.

Mr. John Howse.

Mr. Thomas Johnson.

*Stewards for this present Year, of the
Annual Feast held by the Gentlemen
Educated at Merchant-Taylors-
School.*

Gentlemen,

TH E great Respect I do, and always
shall, bear to the School wherein I
was Educated, made me readily comply
with your Commands to Preach before you:
Tho' those Commands were so late given,
as not to allow me the usual time to prepare
for my so doing; which must in part ex-
cuse the meanness of the Performance.

B

But

But, however that is, since You were, upon Hearing it, pleased to declare You liked it, and thereupon to urge me to the Publication of it ; the same Love and Respect which I bear to You, as my School-fellows, prevailed with me, against my Inclinations, to comply even in this. Nor shall I make any Apology to You, or to the World ; but only desire You, since You will have it published, to accept it as a grateful Acknowledgment of the many Favours You have, on this occasion, conferred upon

Gentlemen,

Dec. 14.
1704.

Your most humble Servant,

THO. COOKE.

Hebrews, Chap. 13. the latter part
of the 16th Verse,

*With such Sacrifices God is well
pleased.*

THE manifold Right God hath to
the Service of Man ; and the in-
dispensable Obligations lying upon
Man to render to the Almighty, all the
Benefits and Blessings which he hath re-
ceived and daily doth receive from him,
I shall not endeavour to lay before You ;
because I have Reason to hope better of
You, than that either You are ignorant of
these Things, or stand in need of having
them proved or explained.

Neither is there any such Difficulty or
Obscurity in the Phrases wherein my Text
is expressed, or in the Relation it bears to

the Context, as can require any nice or critical Opening and Consideration.

Wherefore (instead of any Preface, which might otherwise be useful to these Purposes) I shall immediately enter upon the Discussion of these Words of the Apostle, (whoever he was that wrote this Epistle) wherein he tells us, that *With such Sacrifices God is well pleased.*

In speaking whereto, I propose to proceed in this Method.

First, To evince what Sacrifices they are which the Apostle declares God to be well pleased with.

Secondly, To shew what is to be understood by the Almighty's being well pleased with them.

Thirdly, To apply all that shall be said to the solemn Occasion of our meeting together in this Place, at this time.

First then, I propose to evince what Sacrifices they are which the Apostle declares God to be well pleased with.

Whatsoever is, by Man, in a Religious manner, offered up to Almighty God, with design to shew his Gratitude for Mer-

Sacrifices recommended.

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Mercies receiv'd, to beg future Blessings, or to atone for Sins committed by him, may properly be call'd a Sacrifice. Tho' that word is originally, and most generally apply'd, both by sacred and profane Writers, to denote such animate or inanimate Things as have been (for the before-mentioned purposes) offered up, on an Altar, to the Divine Maker and Disposer of the Universe; or, such Creatures, as have been (by the Dictates of Natural or Revealed Religion) slain, or burnt, in Honour of their Creator.

Thus, the first Act of Religion which, we know, the Sons of *Adam* expressed to God, was that of a Sacrifice; wherein, tho' *Abel* was, by the Searcher of Hearts, rather approv'd than *Cain*; yet doubtless *Cain* would also have been accepted; or, God would have had some respect to him, though not so much as to *Abel*; had he only offered of the Fruits of the Earth to God, and not proceeded to sacrifice the Life of his Brother, to his own evil Surmises and malicious Resentments; for it was not so much the Sacrifice it self, as the base Dispositions (known to God only) where-

wherewith he offered it, which made God not have respect to *Cain*.

And, as Sacrifice was the first Act of Religion, which the sacred History informs us, the immediate Sons of *Adam* exercised; so, the same History evinces, that all the succeeding Generations exercised the same, being moved thereto by the natural Light, or Religion, which was by their Maker impressed on their Minds. Thus, in the first Ages of the World, and through the times of the Patriarchs, Men, tho' they had no written Law, yet had they one in their Hearts; and they were, in this respect (as the Apostle speaks) *A Law unto themselves*; or, *They did, by Nature, the things contained in the Law*; which they continued duly and religiously to observe, and do, for many Ages; 'till, in process of time, a general Corruption of Manners overspread the Face of the Earth; which owed its rise to the too wilful fall of the first Man, and a gradual decay of natural Light or Religion, which thereupon crept in and seized upon his Offspring; too many whereof did accordingly lose the Primitive Notions, and recede from the commendable

Rom. 2. 14.

Sacrifices recommended.

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mendable practise of their Ancestors; whilst some of them sacrificed not at all; others offered indecent Sacrifices to God; and most, of them who offer'd such Sacrifices as were decent in themselves, rather sacrificed to Creatures than to God; or at best they offered them to the true God, under false Figures and Representations. And, when the Sons of Men were generally sunk into these depraved Notions and corrupt Practices (they being no longer fit to be left to themselves, or to the guidance of their Nature; the Strength and Vigour whereof was greatly fallen off and impaired) God, who is ever abundant in Mercy and Goodness to his Darling Man, in a miraculous manner revealed his Will to him; reminding him of, and obliging him to, the practise of all the Religious and Moral Duties, which the pure and uncorrupt Nature of Man had taught the first Generations; but now, through Depravity and Corruption, they were wholly lost and forgot: For these Reasons did the Almighty reveal and publish his Will to the Sons of Men; in the Ritual part of which Will, which part is known to prescribe, and set down, all the Acts
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and Ceremonies of Religion, which the Persons to whom, and for whose Sakes, it was revealed, were to exercise: In that Ritual part, I say, many Sacrifices, as principal Acts of Religion, were Instituted. The Institution, the Nature, the Use, and the End, of all which (that I may be spared speaking farther of them) are at large set forth in the Book of *Leviticus*. So that, these may be termed Legal Sacrifices, or, such as the first chosen People of God, were, by his revealed Will and written Law, appointed and directed to offer up to him, who thereby Instituted them.

Now all these Sacrifices, whether Patriarchal or Legal, were but Types of that great Sacrifice, which was, at an appointed time, according to the repeated Promises made by God, to be once, and but once, offered up, for the Sins of Mankind: Which Sacrifice having been, long since, made for us in the Person of the Son of God, taking to it the Nature of Man; even in the Person of Jesus Christ, who, as well as He is Man, is God blessed for evermore. He, the Antitype, at once fulfilled, and put an end to all the typical Sacrifices that preceded the time of his coming

Sacrifices recommended.

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coming into the World, not only to be Born amongst us ; but also in our own Nature, to die for us ; that so, in the same Nature, which had so many Ages before offended ; he might effectually appease and reconcile his and their Heavenly Father to the sinful Sons of Men.

Which Christ was not only Sacrificed for us, but he also made a second Revelation of the Will of God to us : A Revelation, much more clear, and perfect, than the First ; being a Revelation of more Divine Mysteries ; more easy and pleasant Duties ; better Promises, and much more glorious Rewards, than ever had before been made in the World. In which Revelation we read of the Sacrifices which were thereby done away, and of some which remain to be offered up to God : But, the Nature of them is wholly changed ; they are no longer Carnal, but Spiritual ; they consist not in slaying, or burning, any animate, or inanimate Creatures ; but, in Offering up our selves, that is, the Powers and Faculties of our Souls, and Bodies, in the Service, and to the Glory of Almighty God.

C

Thus

The Christian

Thus St. Paul, 1 Rom. Ch. 12. v. 1. *Be-seeches us by the mercies of God to present our bodies ; and in the following Verse, Our minds, as living sacrifices, holy, acceptable to God, this being but our reasonable service : Or, such as we are, in Reason and Justice, bound to pay him.*

Tho' then the Types of Christ being fulfilled, are also abolished ; yet the Gospel prescribes some principal good Duties, and enjoins us to offer Them up to our Heavenly Father, for the same ends, tho' not in the same manner, that the *Israelites* offered the Sacrifices Instituted by the Law, which was given to them by *Moses* ; And, for this Reason, those Gospel good Works or Duties are termed Sacrifices.

So that there have been, and are, three sorts of Sacrifices, which (at their respective proper Times and Seasons) have been, and are acceptable to Almighty God : The first whereof was the result of Natural ; the other two were instituted by Revealed Religion : For there were such as were Patriarchal, and such as were Legal ; and there are now, such as are Evangelical ; that is, as are prescribed and recommended by the Gospel, as such. And as these last
are

Sacrifices Recommended.

II

are the only ones can be used by the Divine Warrant and Authority ; - the Gospel being the only Law of God now in force : So I shall alone , at present , recommend these Spiritual Sacrifices , because they alone are made acceptable to God , in and by his Son Jesus Christ.

Neither shall I enumerate every Duty which is represented to be of the Nature of a Sacrifice in the New Testament ; but shall pick out the three most eminent ones , as being most proper for us , at this time , to Meditate on. And those are,

First, The Sacrifice of Prayer, and all other Acts of Devotion.

Secondly, The Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving.

Thirdly, The Sacrifice of Charity in general, particular regard being had to a principal Branch there of Almsgiving.

Each of which I shall very briefly lay before you , and in the Order I have named them.

First then , I am to lay before you the Sacrifice of Prayer, and all other Acts of

The Christian

Devotion. The true and proper ends of all Sacrificing have been, to return Thanks thereby to God for Mercies already receiv'd, to beg future Blessings at his Hands, or to entreat him to pardon the Sins of the Person by whom, or for whose sake, the Sacrifice (of what Nature soever) is offered : And consequently as Prayer, and all other outward Acts of Devotion, do effectually serve to all those Ends, so they may, not improperly, be termed Christian Sacrifices. For which Reason our Apostle in the 10th Chap. of this Epistle to the *Hebrews*, reminding Christians of the all-sufficient Sacrifice offered for them by the Author of their Faith, and recounting the Advantages accruing to them thereby, that they may duly reap those Advantages, and fully answer the End, that so they may receive the Benefit of the One great Gospel-Sacrifice, he especially advises them, at the 25th Verse, *Not to forsake the assembling of themselves together.* Which Advice, as it cannot import less than the observing to pay all the Publick Acts of Divine Worship, of which Prayer is the chief ; so it doth more than imply that Prayer, and the other Acts of Devotion which necessarily

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accompany it, are some of those Sacrifices which God, by the Gospel, hath declared himself to be well-pleased with. Or, if this be not yet clear enough, it must be illustrated by the next Particular. For I am to Observe,

Secondly, That the next Christian Sacrifice is, that of Praise and Thanksgiving. Which is so necessary a Part of Prayer, that He cannot on just Grounds, hope to obtain what he Prays to God for, who doth not at the same time, render due Thanks and Praise for the Mercies he hath already received from him. As our very Beings, and all the Blessings, whether Spiritual or Temporal, which we enjoy, are dispensed to us by the Almighty Hand of Providence; so it becomes us, as the Psalmist expresses it, *To offer unto God* Ps. 50. v. 14. *thanksgiving*; or, as the Apostle more fully, *To give thanks always for all things unto God and the Father, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: Eph. 5. 20. So that, our Being, and every Instance of our Well-being in this World, should move us to this Duty.

Amongst which Instances of our Well-being, the First, and therefore most preferable, is that of an early, liberal Education:

The Christian

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Amongst which Instances of our Well-being, the First, and therefore most preferable, is that of an early, liberal Education:

tion : Which Education, as it is the first Instance of our Well-being, in order of Time ; so, is it also That which alone enables, and qualifies us, rightly to pursue and acquire all other Temporal Advantages : Which Education, when it is bestowed, as it ought to be, and as it was upon us, it refines, and instructs the Minds of Young Persons, not only, with the Rudiments of humane Learning ; but also, with the sound Principles, of the most pure Religion profess'd in this most Holy Church. And He, who is thus Educated, (which is, what We all have been) is not only instructed to know Books, and Men ; but, duly to know God too, so far as Man is, in this Life, capable of knowing him : And that Knowledge should influence everyone, on whom it is bestowed, sincerely to Serve, and Worship God ; daily, and devoutly to Pray to him, for whatsoever he stands in need of ; and, continually to offer up Praise, and so glorifie God for all he has, or does enjoy. This being what the Apostle earnestly exhorts us to in the Verse immediately preceding my Text.

Thirdly, The other Christian Sacrifice is, that of Charity in general, particular regard

regard being had to a principal Branch thereof, Alms-giving. This Sacrifice is especially recommended to us, in the Verse whereof my Text is a part, which, as it lies entire, runs thus: *But to do good and to Communicate, or, to Distribute, as we sometimes render it, forget not; for with such Sacrifices God is well pleased.* So that my Text is, by the Apostle, urged as a Motive to persuade Men not to forget the Christian Grace of Charity in general, implied by *doing good*; and above all, not to omit the particular, but principal part thereof, Alms-giving; which is implied by the *Communicating, or Distributing*, which is here exhorted to.

Now, tho' Acts of Charity may be done by Men, with respect to the Souls as well as the Bodies of one another; yet the Corporal Acts of that Duty, which are enumerated in the close of the 25th Ch. of St. *Matthew*, being alone exhorted to by the Apostle in this place, consequently I shall recommend those only to you at this time.

These then, are the true, and proper Christian Sacrifices; the Sacrifice of Prayer; of Praise; and, of Charity: Amongst which, if I may be permitted to make
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Comparisons, I shall beg leave (as St. Paul doth, in a much like Case) to assert, that
 1 Cor. 13. 13. *The greatest of these is Charity.*

Secondly, I am now to shew, what is to be understood, by the Almighty's being well pleas'd with these Sacrifices.

Which Phrase doth, at once imply,

First. That he will Accept. And,

Secondly, That he will Reward them.

First, Then, I say, this Phrase implies, that God will accept these Sacrifices. Whatsoever is Commanded in the Word of God, it is our Duty to yield Obedience thereto; and, that Obedience, if chearfully yielded; or, the exercise of all such Duties, if it be just and regular; we have the infallible Promise of God himself for it, that he will readily accept such our Services and Performances. As then Prayer, Thanksgiving, and Charity, are indispensable Duties incumbent on Christians to discharge; so, whosoever doth duly and regularly discharge them, is sure that God the Father will, through the Merits of his Son, accept them: That is, he will hear the Prayers of the Righteous, and grant their Requests; he will hearken to the Praises of the Just and Thankful, and be pleased,

as

as the Psalmist expresses it, with *That Sacrifice of* Ps. 69. 30, 31.
Righteousness : And, as for Corporal Acts of Cha-
 rity, as he positively hath declared, the Son of St. Matt. 25.
 God, will take them, as done to himself ; which 40.
 is such an Evident sign of acceptance, as needs nei-
 ther Explication, nor Confirmation.

Secondly, The Phrase of God's being well
 pleas'd with our Christian Sacrifices, implies far-
 ther, that he will reward them. There is no Gos-
 pel Duty, but what hath suitable Rewards pro-
 posed, and affix'd to it ; even such, as will be be-
 stow'd, both here, and hereafter ; both in this
 present, and, in a much better future Life : And,
 as for the particular Duties which I have been
 hitherto recommending to you, we are beyond
 all possibility of doubt, or dispute assured ; That
 if we duly ask of God, we shall have what we
 ask for ; *For all things whatsoever we shall ask,* St. Matt. 21.
in prayer, beleiving, we shall receive. 22. For which
 Reason, *St. James* draws this general Conclusion,
 (from Premises which specify, some particular
 good Effects of Prayer ;) he draws, I say, this
 Conclusion, that *The effectual fervent prayer of a* Jam. 5. 16.
righteous man availeth much. So that, provided
 the Person Praying be duly qualified, his Prayers
 will certainly procure him present and future,
 temporal and spiritual Blessings. And, as Pray-
 er is thus efficacious ; so, we are told, of the ne-
 cessary Branch of it, Praise, or Thanksgiving ;
 that, if, *We do in every thing, by prayer, and sup-* Phil. 4. 6, 7.
plication, with thanksgiving let our requests be made

known unto God, then the peace of God which passeth all understanding, will keep our hearts and minds thro' Christ Jesus. And as in one place we are told, that *Whosoever offereth up praise to God, glorifieth God*; so, in another, we read that he who in this manner serveth Christ, him will God honour: that is, he will esteem him, his faithful Servant in this Life, and he will raise him to unspeakable Honour in the next Life. And as for Charity, how often, and how expressly, are we told; that, *the Lord will repay it*; that, *It will cover a multitude of sins*; That *He which soweth it plentifully, shall reap also plentifully*; that *God is not unrighteous to forget such works, and labour that proceed of love*; That *God loveth a cheerful giver*; That *Men thereby gather to themselves a good reward in the day of necessity*; And above all, that *Men do thereby lay hold on eternal life*; For, it is by the due exercise of corporal Acts of Charity, (as I may, for distinction sake, call them) that our Saviour assures us, in the close of the 25th of St. Matthew, That *The righteous shall go away into life eternal*.

And thus, having gone thro' the two Heads necessary to open, and explain my Text: I come now, as I propos'd *Thirdly* and *Lastly*, to apply all that hath been said to the solemn Occasion of our meeting together, in this Place, at this Time. For, as we all have publicly poured forth our Prayers, and that, as I hope, with due Fervency, and Sincerity; so, we have, at this time

time especially, Reason and a solemn Opportunity, afforded us, to offer up hearty Praises to God, as for his Mercies in general, so, particularly for that liberal Education, which was by the Piety of our Parents, and the indefatigable care of our Masters, bestowed upon us. The Reason we have, to give Thanks to God, on this special account, is, because it is to our Education, next to the Providence of God (in preserving us alive) that we owe this opportunity of being together.

We all were, in our tender Years, instructed in the same Rudiments of Learning; and, in the same Orthodox Principles of Religion; and, though we have not all equally improved, in the one; yet, I hope, we all, so imbib'd other, as that we shall constantly, and resolutely continue, to be sound Members, of this most pure Church: And, though we are not all, now, publick Professors of Learning; yet the first Instructions we received, qualified us all, so to read Men, as well as Books; that they put us into several capacities of improving our Fortunes, and consequently, They enable us all to make so solemn, and so friendly an Appearance, as we do, at this time: To compleat which, we must, to the Prayers and Praises, we have hitherto offered up, to the Throne of Grace; go, and add such Acts of Charity as are, at this time, justly expected from us.

The end of which is, to encourage those, who are now under the same Elements of Instruction,
that

The Christian

that we our selves have formerly been, to improve, with all diligence therein : For, they are encouraged to hope, that such of them, as are not able themselves, to go thro' the expence of University Improvement ; will be assisted, and enabled, so to do, by this *Charitable Society*. And I may assert, that all possible Prudence, and Care, is used justly to dispense, what has been given, and what you shall now freely give, to this End.

Let us then consider, that, what Charity we think fit to bestow, on this Day, and all the like opportunities, is not barely to relieve the bodily wants of those who shall be thought worthy Objects of it, but to improve and enlighten their Minds : That, it is not bestow'd only to support their Being, but to raise them up to be Pillars of our Church and State. And as no design, can be more Honourable ; nor, no end more Glorious, than this : so I hope, the Consideration of this End, will move you all chearfully to Give, and Contribute, towards it : Remembring, that with such Sacrifices especially, God is, and will be, well pleased. That is, he will graciously accept them, now ; and, he will abundantly Reward them, hereafter, with Eternal Life, to be had thro' the Merits of Christ Jesus.

To whom, with the Father, and the Blessed Spirit, be ascrib'd all Honour, Power, and Glory, for Ever, and Ever. Amen.

F I N I S.

